FEATURES

Winchester Walks in Solidarity with Minnesota, immigrant neighbors

TAVISHI CHATTOPADHYAY | CORRESPONDENT

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Winchester residents came out on Saturday, Feb. 7, despite the falling snow, to protest ICE raids, arrests and deportations. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/TARA HUGHES

As snow fell on Feb. 7, more than 100 people gathered at the Grif
Museum to walk to Crawford Memorial Church in a show of solid

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immigrants amid nationwide ICE raids, arrests and deportations.

"Winchester in Solidarity: Walking With Our Neighbors" was organized by the political activism group IndivisibleWin, the Network for Social Justice (NFSJ), and local faith leaders and community members to show support for immigrants, due process, democracy and community.

'Winchester in Solidarity: Walking With Our Neighbors' attendees walk out of the First Congregational Church holding various signs. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/TAVISHI CHATTOPADHYAY

Communities across the country have planned events and demonstrations in support of the Twin Cities, which have seen frequent clashes h

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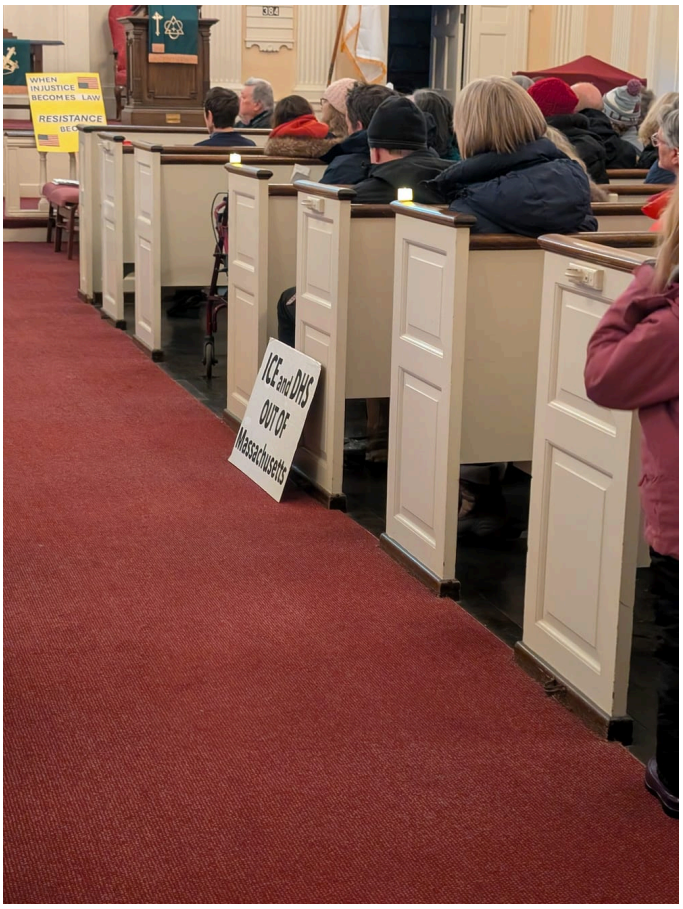
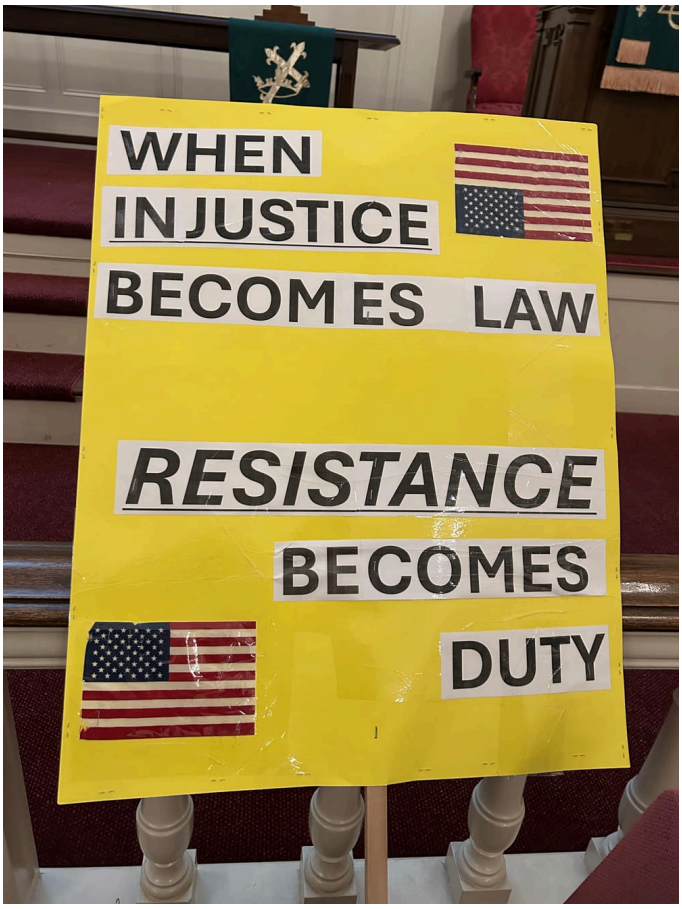
residents and federal Immigration and Customs Enforcement officers, and the arrests of thousands of immigrants.

Rebecca Slisz, executive director of NFSJ, received emails and texts from faith leaders and community members suggesting she organize something. Ultimately, an email from Lily Werner, a Winchester High School student who had interned at NFSJ, was the final push to start organizing.

“It just felt like the right time to do something visible in Winchester to show our concern for what is happening,” Slisz said.





Left, filled pews and signs. Right, A sign from the ‘Winchester in Solidarity: Walking with Our Neighbors’ leans against a pew at the Crawford Memorial Church. It reads “ICE and DHS Out of Massachusetts.” WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTOS/TAVISHI CHATTOPADHYAY

The crowd was given candles and pamphlets before leaving arou
to walk to the first stop, the First Congregational Church.

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During the walk, participants held signs with phrases such as “Ice Makes for a Slippery Slope,” “ICE and DHS Out of Massachusetts” and “When Injustice Becomes Law, Resistance Becomes Duty.” Many had come to show their frustration about the Trump administration’s actions in Minneapolis and around the country.

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“Given all the chaos at the federal level, I think it’s important that we think about what we can do locally,” said John Bellaire, a candidate for School Committee.

Others had joined the walk for the connection with their community members and to speak with a collective voice.

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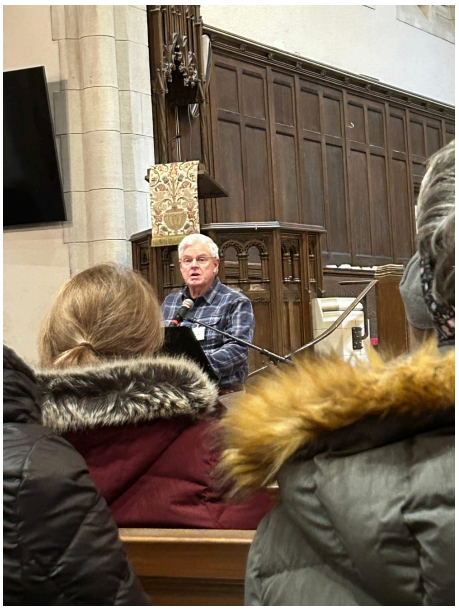

A variety of speakers and Cantor Beth Levin, who sang and played guitar, during the 'Winchester in Solidarity: Walking with Our Neighbors' event. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTOS/TARA HUGHES

"This is one of the few times we have the opportunity to speak as a community," said Sue Doubler, an associate professor teaching science education at Lesley University.

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Once the crowd reached the church, there was a brief intermission with remarks from faith leaders and community members, and a musical performance from Cantor Beth Levin, who sang and played guitar. Attendees sang along to “Hold On,” a new protest song written by Minneapolis singer-songwriter Heidi Wilson, and “This Little Light of Mine.”

The speeches emphasized the importance of supporting Winchester’s immigrant neighbors.

“We will walk in solidarity with immigrants and all those who demand to be governed by laws,” said Bruce Alexander, a First Congregational Church member who took to the podium.

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Winchester residents and families came out to protest ICE and support their neighbors on Saturday, Feb. 7. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/TARA HUGHES

The walk ended with another set of remarks from the faith leaders at Crawford Memorial Church, before attendees were encouraged to join the church for its annual chili cook-off, which benefits New England Justice for Our Neighbors, an organization offering free legal aid to immigrants seeking humanitarian-based visas.

As people started to file out of the church pews, they passed a memorial listing the names of people who were killed by ICE agents and placed their candles in front of it.

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A memorial listing the names of people who lost their lives to ICE. WINCHESTER NEWS STAFF PHOTO/TARA HUGHES

"We're here for you," Slisz said. "There are people in Winchester, community members, town stakeholders who care."

Tavishi Chattopadhyay is a journalism student at Boston University. This story is part of a partnership between Winchester News and the Boston Univ Department of Journalism.

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Well, Winchester, we made it through the weekend with only a coating of snow that amounted to nothing on Sunday afternoon. But during the Feb. 22-23 blizzard, Winchester News once again asked residents to send their snow photos. And here is what we received! Solmaz Amirnazmi said her daughters and

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Winchester Community Music School set to expand, upgrade

The big events in Winchester Community Music School always take place in Nichols Performance Hall. With the school and its performances' growing in popularity, the hall and many of its amenities are due for an upgrade. The performance hall is one of the main areas that the school seeks to

TAVISHI CHATTOPADHYAY | CORRESPONDENT

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Rep. Michael Day helps House colleagues pass sweeping energy affordability bill

The following was submitted by the Office of Rep. Michael S. Day: Rep. Michael S. Day and his colleagues in the House of Representatives recently passed energy affordability legislation that would result in over $9 billion in savings for utility ratepayers over the next 10 years. The bill maintains critical

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Winchester gun owners face new training rules starting April 2

Public safety data How Winchester compares on firearms licenses in comparable Massachusetts communities Active licenses as of Jan. 25, 2025 — Source: Massachusetts Criminal History Systems Board License to carry firearms Firearms identification card Winchester and Marblehead are the focus communities. Peers selected based on comparable population size, demographics and suburban

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